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Grain Procurement Procedure on Col- lective Farms

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1. The Grain procurement campaigns are one of the most important and responsible forms of Government and Party activity in the USSR. The fact that all local, raion, oblast, republic and all-union government, Party and economic organs are mobilized in their entirety to carry out this campaign is evidence of its importance.
2. Some of the organizations involved in grain-procurement campaigns are the following: village, raion and oblast councils of workers' deputies; lower level Party organizations such as raion committees (raikomy) and oblast committees (obkomy) of the Party; raion and oblast agriculture departments (selkhozotdely); machine tractor stations (MTS); organs of the Ministry of Procurement; organs of the MVD, and so on. I have mentioned only the lower levels of the above-listed organizations since it is they essentially who do most of the basic work in grain procurement. Republic and all-union Party and economic organs in most cases only exercise general supervision and control over the work of the lower level units.
3. Every year, the grain-procurement campaign is preceded by a long preparatory period. As much as one-and-one half to two months in advance of the procurement campaign, plenum meetings of raion and oblast Party committees, as well as lower-level Party organizations, adopt broad Party resolutions obligating the entire Party, Government and economic apparatus to complete, within a determined period, all preparatory arrangements for harvesting, threshing and delivering of the grain to the State.
4. In the raion, the First Secretary of the raion Party Committee is the figure around whom all the feverish preparations for the procurement campaign revolve. The Secretary of raion Party committee can justly be called "The Little Director" in whose hands is concentrated all the power in the raion. This little bureaucrat's Party career depends on how much grain he can squeeze out of the collective farms and for this reason the majority of raion and oblast secretaries of the Party Committee are heartless people interested only in profit for the State. In fulfilling Party assignments, they take no stock of the interests or needs of the people; the foundation of all their work and management is exclusively Party orders and directives. During the period of the harvest and the grain procurement campaign, the raion Party committees send an entire army of agents out into the collective farms. All the personnel of the raion Party

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Committee, the raion Executive Committee, the Agriculture Department, procurement organizations, organs of the MVD etc, dig around on the collective farms and fulfill the role of Party mule drivers. Where an entire year can go by on a collective farm without a visit from a Party functionary, during the harvest and procurement period, these little Party bureaucrats stay on the collective farms by the hundreds and do not leave until the grain has been entirely carried away to State grain bins (zakroma).

5. Agents of the raion Party committees are provided with broad powers and actually direct the grain procurement campaign themselves. They bear full responsibility for fulfillment of the grain procurement quotas along with Party secretaries and collective farm chairmen on those collective farms assigned to these agents. For this reason, not infrequently these very agents of the raion Party committee can be found along with collective farm chairmen and secretaries of primary Party organizations numbered among those accused of being "malicious disruptors of the grain procurement campaign". For example, in 1947 in the Borispolskiy raion of the Kievskiy oblast, six collective farm chairmen and one agent of the raion Party Committee were condemned for sabotaging the grain delivery program. Other victims were seven secretaries of primary Party organizations who were deprived of their Party cards. One of the collective farm chairmen, T Shvets of the Budyenny Collective Farm fled to unknown regions in order to escape the fate of his condemned colleagues.
6. Preparations for the harvest and grain delivery campaign in the raion and on the collective farms is carried on as follows:

The raion Party committee, the raion executive committee and the agent of the Ministry of Procurement determine grain delivery quotas for each collective farm, compile quotas and charts for daily and weekly grain deliveries to the State, distribute manpower and funds among the collective farms and carry out general supervision for grain delivery preparations in the raion. Reception points of "Zagotzerno" (grain procurement) and other procurement organizations of the Ministry of Procurement are prepared for receiving the grain. New grain storage facilities, sheds, threshing floors, grain dryers etc are constructed. "Zagotzerno" reception points open up gasoline pumps during this period to refuel trucks participating in grain hauling. Eating facilities are opened up, and so on. Raion and oblast highway departments carry out repairs of roads, bridges and fords and supervise the progress of similar work on the collective farms. Organs of the MVD check the reliability of persons holding responsible positions connected with threshing, hauling, receiving and storing the grain. They also set up regulations for fireman sentry duty and so on. All transport facilities of the raion and oblast as well as those of military units and industrial enterprises of all-union subordination are mobilized for hauling the grain. Urban workers and employees are mobilized for work on the collective farms and they are obliged by resolution of the oblast Executive Committee or the raion Executive Committee to work a determined number of days at nearby collective farms. Newspapers of the regions keep a running account of the progress of preparatory work on the collective farms, and so on.
7. Until grain delivery quotas are completely fulfilled, all traffic in grain and grain products in raions and oblasts is forbidden. During harvest, collective farm markets are forbidden altogether and are dispersed by organs of the MVD.
8. Preparations for the harvest and grain delivery campaigns on the collective farms are supervised by the collective farm administration, Party organizations and village councils. As long as two weeks before harvest, the collective farm administration is obliged to have completed all work on repair of harvesting machinery, threshing units, transport facilities, etc. The problem of sack containers is very acute on collective farms. The collective farms of the Ukraine send their representatives to Moscow, Yaroslavl, Ivanovo, etc, to purchase sacks and this costs the collective farms 10-12 thousand rubles every harvest season.
9. Collective farms administrations select and confirm grain weighers, threshing floor managers, machinists, warehousemen, haulers, guards, etc, that is everyone concerned with the grain. Sometimes Party organizations propose the above-named employees to the collective farm administrations, having beforehand selected and confirmed them at Party conferences, distributing the more important posts among Party members.
10. The collective farms are obligated to construct grain dryers, covered threshing floors (for work in rainy weather), and grain storage facilities. Grain dryers also cost the collective farms several thousand rubles and are not actually economically justified since their daily capacity is only 10-15 quintals.
11. The collective farm weighing apparatus (weights and scales) must undergo government inspection and be sealed.
12. The collective farm chairman together with the Machine Tractor Station agronomist determine the biological yield. It should be noted that the size of future grain delivery quotas depends on the determination of crop perspectives (collective farms are divided into groups according to these data). Collective farm chairmen are extremely cautious as regards the determination of crop yield perspectives.

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...the crop yield per-
 spectives were determined at 15.5 quintals per hectare as an average, but in actuality the collective farm gathered only 13.5 quintals. The collective farm was accused of either losing the grain in harvest or of stealing the grain, and the collective farm chairman was threatened with court action. If the collective farm chairman lowers crop yield perspectives, he is also threatened with unpleasantness, since he can be accused of attempting to create a reserve to be stolen, and so on. For this reason, the collective farm chairman determine crop perspectives exactly, but with a calculation of 1.5-2 quintals for harvest losses in spite of the fact that this practice is expressly forbidden.

13. Raion consumers goods unions receive certain categories of scarce merchandise during the harvest season as a means of luring people out to the fields to work on Sundays and holidays (the merchandise is sold at the place of work).
14. The men of the collective farm are obliged to have a scythe for work in the field, while the women are obliged to have a sickle and a rake, since 25-30% of the harvest is done by hand. In 1947 the collective farms of the Borispolskiy raion gathered all winter grains by hand; they comprised 60% of all the harvest work.
15. During the harvest season, all absences from the collective farms, all leaves and transfers, etc, are forbidden. The organs of the MVD set up traps at railroad stations and market places to catch loiterers and ship them off to work at the nearest collective farm. The political aspects of the harvest season are taken care of by an entire army of agitators, lecturers, and propagandists who carry out their work in the brigades, crews, etc. Portable movie projectors, clubs, libraries, etc, are brought out to places where night work is being carried on.
16. During this period, the collective farms are obligated to organize group feeding, open nurseries and kindergartens. Each collective farm family unit receives a "Family Quota" ("plan k dvory") indicating the amount of grain to be harvested by that family unit. All administrative personnel of the collective farm as well as men over 60 are recruited for harvesting the grain.
17. Two weeks before the harvest begins all the collective farm livestock is allowed to rest and during this period "test runs" or inspections are carried out as the final stage of preparations. The test runs are mutually checked, one collective farm by another, and special statements are drawn up, indicating preparedness of the collective farm, which are sent to the raion Party committees. The collective farms await the beginning of the harvest work.
18. The process of gathering the harvest and delivering it to the State is as follows: In the first place, the crop is gathered in strict accordance with production plans, that is each crew and brigade only gathers grain from its own area and with its own facilities. The grain is gathered selectively, ie from individual sectors according to degree of ripeness, disregarding ripeness of the fields as a whole. Threshing usually begins the third or fourth day of the harvest season and is also carried on by brigade and crew. During this same period the collective farms receive their quotas for obligatory grain deliveries to the State. Obligatory quotas are assigned directly to each collective farm chairman, who signs a receipt. The quotas indicate quantities and dates of deliveries of farm products to the State. Obligatory quotas of grain deliveries from the collective farms as a rule are assigned at conferences of collective farm chairmen and village councils in the presence of secretaries of primary Party organizations. At these conferences, the collective farm chairmen receive stern directives and warnings on procedure for State grain deliveries, with consideration of mistakes made in past years, and secretaries of primary Party organizations receive directives on "political coverage" of the harvest campaign (work of agitators, issuance of wall newspapers, writing of campaign slogans, the organization of "Komsomol control posts" etc).
19. Compulsory grain deliveries by the collective farms are computed according to the plowed acreage assigned to the collective farm; 1.88 quintals of grain per hectare.
20. Payment in kind to the machine tractor stations is computed from the volume of work fulfilled on the collective farms and from the yield per hectare. The collective farms are divided into three categories according to yield per hectare: Collective farms attaining yields over 20 quintals per hectares are numbered in the first group and are assigned payment-in-kind quotas far higher than collective farms of the second and third group. In the period 1947-1949 the division of collective farms according to yield per hectare was rarely practiced since all the collective farms surrendered all their grain and even wiped out their fodder reserve (furazhnyi fond). Collective farms make payments in kind for work of the machine tractor stations according to the following norms:

Flowing of fallow land	1.5 quintals per hectare
Cultivation (one row)	0.24 quintals per hectare
Harrowing (one row)	0.05 quintals per hectare
Sowing of winter grains	0.80 quintals per hectare
Harvesting winter grains (with reapers)	0.40 quintals per hectare

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Threshing per ton	1.20 quintals per ton
Hauling of grain to "Zagotzerno"	
delivery points per ton-kilometer	0.10 quintals

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The overall payment in kind of collective farms to machine tractor stations is 6-10 quintals per hectare. [redacted] from an overall total of 1200 hectares of plowed land had 750 hectares sown in grains and oil seeds and the remaining land sown with sugar beet, potatoes, perennial grasses and fallow. In 1947 this collective farm had a gross grain harvest of 10,220 quintals from its total of 750 hectares of grain oil seed. That same year the collective farm was assigned the following grain procurement quota:

Obligatory delivery of grain	1968 quintals
Payment in kind for MTS work	2640 quintals
Advance delivery of payment in kind	830 quintals
Arrears of previous years	940 quintals

In addition the collective farm was assigned an additional quota of 700 quintals of grain deliveries. Thus the collective farm in 1947 was obligated to deliver 7078 quintals plus 500 quintals for hauling the grain in government trucks (almost 60% of the above figure was thus hauled). In 1947 the farm delivered 7550 quintals in all to the State but was credited with only 6900 quintals. The remaining 650 quintals went to cover dirt and weed content (almost 30%) and to cover the exchange coefficient.

21. The exchange coefficient can be explained as follows: All collective farms plant grains, legumes and oil seed crops in strict accordance with Government plan, but grain deliveries are not always computed from the sowing quota of these crops and the collective farms are obliged to resort to the exchange of one crop for another. For example: if the collective farm is assigned a quota for wheat delivery which is larger than the amount of wheat it has on hand, the collective farm fills it up with some other crop instead according to the exchange coefficient. One quintal of wheat is the equivalent of 1.75 quintals of corn or 2.80 quintals of millet, or 2.50 quintals of barley, or 3.25 quintals of oats and so on. Legume crops (peas, vetch, kidney-beans as well as buckwheat) can be exchanged for two quintals of wheat. In 1947 the above-named collective farm according to plan had in all nine hectares of peas, which produced 72 quintals gross, but the quota for delivery to the State was established at 600 quintals. Thus the collective farm was not capable of fulfilling this quota and had to resort to replacing it with other crops. Because of the above circumstances, [redacted] delivering 7550 quintals of grain to the State, was only credited with 6900 quintals and again remained in debt to the State.

22. In this way, from a gross harvest of 10,220 quintals, the collective farm delivered 7,550 to the State; 1,300 were left for seed; the collective farm members were given 875 quintals for their work days; and the rest of the grain (mostly waste) made up the fodder and food reserves. From the cited example it is apparent that the collective farm members did not even receive that 15% of the grain delivered to the State which the collective farm is entitled to use for its own needs. This is the situation with grain deliveries in the best collective farms which because of their location have better soil and get much larger harvests in comparison with their neighbors. For example, where [redacted] harvested an average of 13.5 quintals per hectare, the [redacted] village harvested only 6.5 quintals per hectare and the members of this collective farm received only 87 grams of grain and 30 kopeks for each work day unit.

23. In the years following 1947-1948, the State policy in procurement of agricultural products from the collective farms remained the same as in previous years. In spite of the fact that crop yields increased on most collective farms during these years the situation remained the same as before. As the yields increased, there was a parallel increase in delivery quotas. For example: where [redacted] delivered 240 thousand quintals of grain to the State in 1947, in 1948 it delivered 262 thousand quintals and in 1949 delivered almost 290 thousand quintals.

24. There is one peculiarity in grain procurement policies that should be noted: Each raion (or oblast) upon receiving its planned quota of grain deliveries divides the quota among the collective farms (or raions) in its jurisdiction, basing the distribution on the total quantity of tilled land belonging to each collective farm (or raion). In practice, not all the collective farms are able to fulfill the established quota and therefore, in order to fulfill the overall plan, the grain is taken from those collective farms where it exists, with no consideration of the fact that that collective farm may have already fulfilled its quota. This grain delivery policy leads to a situation where the collective farms have no interest in gathering large harvest since no matter how large the harvest, it will all go to the State anyway.

25. During all the post-World War II years, until 1950, the collective farms even failed to store the required seed and fodder insurance reserves (semenniye i farazhniye fondy) which are supposed to be created at a rate of 10-15% of annual needs. These stores (fondy) for a collective farm [redacted] would come to about 500-600

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quintals. Only in 1948, in connection with the introduction of the grass field system of crop rotation, were there any concrete directives issued concerning the use of grain harvested from the seed plots strictly according to its proper purposes. Subsequently, the State found a means of taking even this grain from the collective farm. For example, if the collective farm did not have enough grain for deliveries to the State, but did have a surplus ("lishki") of grain harvested from seed plots, it received a quota of grain deliveries from a loan fund of seed for collective farms "which had suffered from drought". In 1948-1949, a campaign for such loans was widely carried out in Izmailskiy, Nikolaevskiy and Khersonskiy oblasts. These loans were processed through the grain delivery stations of "Zagotzerno" and the documents never indicated the addresses of collective farms for which the grain was destined. These loans were never returned and were subsequently written off by decisions of general assemblies of the collective farms at the proposal of raion organs. The same situation prevailed with additional pay 50X1 credited to collective farm members for raising good crops.

the collective farm members were credited with additional pay of 608 quintals of grain but it was not given to them (since there was no grain) and was also written off.

26. Beginning in 1948 the planned quotas of wheat, corn and legume crops deliveries to the State from collective farms of the Ukraine were increased as was the plan for advance payment in kind. The following shows the increase in planned grain delivery quotas from the Schors Collective Farm:

1948 - from a gross harvest of 11,720 quintals, 8410 quintals delivered to the State.
1949 - from a gross harvest of 13,860 quintals, 8900 quintals delivered to the State.

Obligatory grain deliveries as well as payment in kind were delivered at the same time, proportionately collective farms are paid for according to established tables. Compulsory grain deliveries to the State are made according to the following prices:

Wheat	per quintal	9.50 rubles
Rye	per quintal	7.50 rubles
Barley	per quintal	6.00 rubles
Corn	per quintal	8.00 rubles

Grain delivered by the collective farms as payment in kind is not paid for by the State.

27. Simultaneously, at the very height of the grain delivery campaign, the collective farms are also obliged to deliver other agricultural products such as meat, eggs, milk, hay, vegetables, wool, potatoes, etc, in the same fashion. These products are calculated for acreage according to the following norms:

Meat	500 grams per hectare
potatoes	15 kilograms per hectare
eggs	20 eggs per hectare
wool	160 grams per hectare
vegetables	20 kilograms per hectare
milk	10 liters per hectare

28. In addition to this, the collective farms receive contract quotas (plany kontraktatsiyi) for such products as honey, apples, watermelons, etc, at State prices. This contracting method is another method of "fleecing" the collective farms by government organs. For example: if market prices for watermelons were 1.50-2.00 rubles per kilogram, the collective farms were obliged to contract them at 15 kopeks. The situation was the same with products such as honey, apples, etc.
29. We must again return to the actual process of harvest and grain deliveries on the collective farms. For an understanding of working conditions thereon. A strict work-day schedule is established and confirmed for the entire harvest and grain procurement season. As a rule, work begins at 0500 and ends at 2200. In addition, there are a number of regulations according to which the collective farm member cannot leave his work until he has fulfilled the established norm. Tardiness for work or failure to appear altogether were eliminated by the most severe means of punishment. The following means of punishment existed: periodic failure to appear for work or systematic tardiness - a fine of up to five work-day units. Systematic failure to appear for work - a sentence of six months to three years for the accused. Absence from work and failure to comply with resolutions of the collective farm administration might mean expulsion from the collective farm and deprivation of the private garden plot and the imposition of excessive fines which in effect lead to the confiscation of all property. The last means of punishment was introduced by the Government in 1948 and it provided that malicious violators of the agricultural artel statute, for utter refusal to participate in the work of the collective farm, could be exiled to Siberia for a term of five years and more.
30. In spite of all the difficulty of harvest work, the collective farm member must work without rest from morning to night. It was not the threat of court action or other repressive measures that forced the collective farm member to work but the deprivation of his private garden ploy, the last source of food. During these days, the entire life of the collective farm, the raion and the oblast must be entirely devoted to one thing, harvesting

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the grain and delivering it to the State. Thousands of slogans and placards make such demands as: "The first grain to the State", "Grain is power", and "More grain for State granaries", etc.

31. The raion medical commission deliberately ceases functioning during this period in order to avoid issuing certificates freeing sick people from work on the collective farms. Raion courts of justice operate almost daily; display courts (for instilling fear) travel out into the villages and collective farms, handing out sentences for absence from work, thievery, etc. The raion jail is full of "disruptors" ("sryvschiki"), "saboteurs", "thieves", etc. In the village of Kolos alone, 26 women were sentenced for absence from work during this period, and in the village of Zavitki, 26 persons were sentenced. In the Borispolsky raion, 49 people were sentenced for thievery; 104 people were sentenced for absence from work and for failure to complete the work norm. In addition, that same year three collective farm chairmen were sentenced and three secretaries of Party organizations were expelled from the Party for "sabotage" of grain procurement. The Party Bureau of the raion Party committee held sittings every five days. All who failed to fulfill assignments of the Party and State were brought to account in the most severe manner. The Bureau of the raion Party committee, consisting of 11 persons imposed Party penalties on the "guilty" (reprimand, severe reprimand, expulsion from the Party and indictment for whatever the offence). Not only members of the Party bureau were present at sessions of the Party bureau, but also Party representatives from the oblast, and not infrequently, Party "birds", soaring at the union republic level, flew in to "apply a little pressure". For example, in 1949, the former second secretary of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party, comrade Melnikov, attended a plenary session of the Borispolsky Raion Party Committee, and at his order, Comrade Lubetsky, chairman of the "Pereystroistvo" collective farm, and Comrade Byely, chairman of the "Pobeda" collective farm were arrested and brought to trial.
32. The collective farms had difficulty in delivering the first quintals of grain from the new harvest, since it came out of threshing still damp, and much loss was permitted. The collective farm dryers had difficulty in bringing the grain to a moisture content of 15%. Grain was dried on the threshing floors, on house roofs, and even on top of the furnaces in the peasants' cottages. The latter method was not always effective. For example, comrade Zabarin, chairman of the Stalin Collective Farm in Pastushovki village, distributed over 1,000 quintals of grain to the collective farm members for drying, but the latter dried the grain then ate it since they were hungry. For this "display of initiative" comrade Zabarin was sentenced to one year. The fear of prison on the part of collective farm chairmen forced them to look for an out through various deals and combinations. Collective farm chairmen went in person to "Zagotzerno" delivery points to offer bribes to seed laboratories, in order to get credit for delivering grain with moisture content not over 15%, etc. Sharp dealers at "Zagotzerno" delivery points exploited this situation for their own purposes. For example, [redacted] farm did not have enough grain suitable for grain deliveries and was falling behind in quota fulfillment, the bookkeeper of the Borispolsky "Zagotzerno" delivery point suggested the following plan [redacted] the collective farm should bring to the "Zagotzerno" office a receipt for the delivery of 1,000 quintals of grain. The "Zagotzerno" office would enter this as grain already delivered, but actually the grain would remain on the collective farm and subsequently be divided between the "operators" of "Zagotzerno" and the collective farm. In this way, the collective farm would be credited with being one of the "leaders" in grain delivery, which would mean personal gain for those who pulled off the operation. Of course, I turned down this proposal, in spite of its allure, but I am sure that other collective farm chairmen agreed to the operation.
33. Collective farm members, convinced that the grain would all go to the State and that they would have nothing left to eat, began stealing the grain on a mass scale as the only way left out of the situation that had been created. They stole from the threshing floors, from the granaries, cut holes in the roofs of railway cars and took out grain, and even stole the sheafs of grain. Armed bands under the guise of "Banderovtsy" carried out raids on collective farm granaries, threshing floors, etc. Some collective farm chairmen resorted to criminal actions in order to leave at least a minimal amount of grain for the collective farm members. For example: in 1949 on the Voroshilov Collective Farm in Zavodovo village, the members harvested only 70-75% of the corn crop, while the remaining ears of corn were gathered much later in each individual area. A number of collective farm chairmen sent reports indicating total completion of threshing, while in actuality some stacks were left in hidden places for a "rainy day" and the threshing was done in the winter after the "fever" of the harvest campaign was over. These operations were not always successful, but they were attempted everywhere as a last chance to create a grain reserve against a "rainy day".
34. The raion Party committee issued directives to collective farm chairmen on norms for payment to members for their work days and norms for the creation of a fodder reserve. In 1948, there was a directive in Borispolsky Raion to pay the members of collective farms no more than one kilogram of wheat per work day and to build the fodder reserve of 0.5 kilogram per head of large work horses or cattle. Additional delivery quotas were assigned to the collective farms without the knowledge of even the Party organizations, only the chairman and the bookkeeper were supposed to know about them. As a cover, this quota was assigned after the basic quota and was fulfilled as if it were a part of the latter. But these additional quotas were assigned in such magnitudes, that

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the collective farms were not able to fulfill them. In order to make sure that a given collective had no more grain left for deliveries to the State, a special raion commission, which the collective farm members christened the "Krasnaya Metla" ("Red Broom") came and carried out a general cleaning of the collective farm granaries. Members of the commission were: the secretary of the raion Party committee, chairman of the raion executive committee, the agent of the Ministry of Procurement, the representative of the Agriculture department, the representative of the village council, etc. The commission checked not only the collective farm office but also all the bins of the empty granaries for grain. It generally found surplus grain by reviewing all grain expenditures and deliveries of insurance reserves (strakhoviye fondy). Only after the visit of the "Red Broom" did official communications appear in the press that some collective farm had fulfilled its grain delivery quota at such and such a percent.

35. A few words on "Zagotzerno" delivery points. In spite of the fact that year by year these points were enlarged by the construction of new grain storage facilities, they could not accommodate the grain that was delivered. The grain was poured out on open threshing floors and under the open sky. During rainy periods, these enormous piles of grain were covered with a thick green layer like grass, from the seeds which had germinated and subsequently were sent to distilleries. Corn, as a rule, laid all winter long under the open sky, turned from yellow to black, and was sent to the distilleries. Observing this situation, one was often astonished as to why such exacting requirements (purity of strain, moisture content not above 15% etc) were imposed on collective farms, when the grain was pitilessly allowed to turn into "manure" when it got to the "State grain bins".
36. In the post-World War II years, grain procurement policies were so cruel and unjust that they provoked discontent not only among ordinary collective farm members but also among managerial personnel of the farm and even Party organizations.

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38. And this is the grain procurement policy on the collective farms of the Soviet Union, a policy which is directed at the strengthening of the State and the impoverishment of the collective farm peasantry.

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